

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please cancel claim 7 without prejudice or disclaimer of its underlying subject matter.

Please amend the claims as follows.

1. (Currently amended) A tire/wheel assembly, comprising:

an annular tube arranged in a closed space formed between a pneumatic tire and a wheel, an outer sectional area of the tube being nonuniform in a tire circumferential direction,

wherein a sectional area changing rate of the closed space by the tube is between 5.0% and 25%. ~~or higher.~~

2. (Original) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 1, wherein the wheel is provided with a valve for adjusting internal pressure of the pneumatic tire, and a valve for adjusting internal pressure of the tube.

3. (Original) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 2, wherein the valve for adjusting the internal pressure of the pneumatic tire and the valve for adjusting the internal pressure of the tube are arranged in opposing positions at the wheel.

4-7. (Canceled)

8. (Currently amended) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 1, wherein the sectional area changing rate is represented by:

$$(A2-A1)/(A-A1) \times 100\%$$

“A” being a sectional area of the closed space when the tube does not exist,

“A1” being a minimum value of ~~an~~ the outer sectional area of the tube, and

“A2” being a maximum value of ~~an~~ the outer sectional area of the tube.

Please add the following new claims.

9. (New) A tire/wheel assembly, comprising:

an annular tube between a pneumatic tire and a wheel, the pneumatic tire fixed to the wheel defining a closed space,

wherein the annular tube arranged is in a portion of the closed space, a remaining portion of the closed space being absent the annual tube, and

wherein an outer sectional area of the annular tube is nonuniform in a tire circumferential direction, the remaining portion of the closed space varying by a sectional area changing rate of between 5.0% and 25%.

10. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 9, wherein the sectional area changing rate is represented by:

$$(A2-A1)/(A-A1) \times 100\%$$

“A” being a sectional area of the closed space,

“A1” being a minimum value of the outer sectional area of the annular tube, and

“A2” being a maximum value of the outer sectional area of the annular tube.

11. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 9, wherein the wheel includes a rim and a disc.

12. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 11, wherein the rim is adapted to fix the wheel to the pneumatic tire, and the disc is adapted to fix the wheel to an axle.

13. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 11, wherein the wheel includes a first valve and a second valve.

14. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 13, wherein the first and second valves are arranged in opposing positions in the tire circumferential direction.

15. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 13, wherein a first valve penetrates the rim to communicate with the closed space.

16. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 13, wherein the internal pressure of the pneumatic tire is adjusted through the first valve.

17. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 13, wherein a second valve penetrates the rim to communicate with the annular tube.

18. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 13, wherein the internal pressure of the annular tube is adjusted through the second valve.

19. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 9, wherein the material of the annular tube is rubber.

20. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 19, wherein the rubber is from the group consisting of natural rubber, isoprene rubber, styrene-butadiene rubber, butadiene rubber, and butyl rubber.

21. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 19, wherein the rubber contains an additive and a reinforcing agent.

22. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 21, wherein the additive is from the group consisting of a filler, a vulcanizing agent, a vulcanization accelerator, a softener, and an antioxidant.

23. (New) The tire/wheel assembly according to claim 21, wherein the reinforcing agent is from the group consisting of silica, carbon black, a resin reinforcing cord, and a steel reinforcing cord.